



CSBG Success Story

Please submit success story to Jessica Simon at jessica.simon@commerce.wa.gov. If you have questions, contact Jessica at 360-725-2850. Due Date: The 10th of the month the story is due.

Date: 1/11/2010

Organization Name:	SNAP Financial Access
Contact Person/Title:	Kerri Rodkey, Director
Contact E-mail:	rodkey@snapwa.org
Contact Phone #:	(509) 456-7174 x 102

1. Success Story is for:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARRA <input type="checkbox"/> FFY 09 (skip to question 8) <input type="checkbox"/> FFY 10 (skip questions 6 & 7)
2. CSBG Project Name:	Sustainable Business Development
3. Total Project Budget:	\$200,000
4. Total CSBG Amount of Budget:	\$98,121
5. Number of total clients expected to serve, with all funds for the project:	70
6. Number of ARRA jobs expected to be created/retained as a result of this project:	45
7. Number of ARRA jobs actually created/retained as a result of this project to date:	15
8. Brief project/activity description:	Creates and retains jobs for low income people through small business development, education, transportation and removal of barriers to employment
9. How will this project help clients, build community, and form new partnerships? What aspects of the project would you like to share with the public:	
<p>This project is helping low income clients by providing or connecting them with resources that enable them to start and grow sustainable businesses or to obtain stable employment. One aspect of the project that has been most successful has been our ability to help new and struggling small business owners increase their income through business counseling, lending, and small grants.</p> <p>An example of this project is Melissa, a single mom who, until being laid off in 2007 was a bookkeeper and general manager for a large company in another city with a variety of small restaurant and commercial businesses. She had gained a high level of expertise in small business bookkeeping and in the various applications of QuickBooks, but was unable to find employment in Spokane where she moved to be near family after a divorce. Melissa decided to start a bookkeeping business in Spokane, and she had gained enough clients to survive at barely over the poverty line. Although unable to repay a loan at this time, with a small grant from the Sustainable Business Development Project she will be able to become certified as a QuickBooks Pro Advisor, bringing with it large benefits for her customers and an ability to double her income working the same number of hours she is working now.</p>	

Many of the businesses SNAP is helping to start and grow are owned by refugees and immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar and several African nations. Fourteen of these immigrants who find it very difficult to gain employment in this economy have been able to earn between \$10 and \$16 an hour by starting businesses such as the commercial janitorial franchises that are so popular among those with limited English proficiency. In some cases they are able to provide jobs for other refugees as well. SNAP partners with World Relief to provide assistance to refugees starting businesses.

Others being helped by this project are needing help with transportation in order to gain a job or a second job. Leah, a single mom with 3 kids, lost her job in the fall and had to go on TANF. She was trying to find work, but was unable to drive her car due to completely unusable tires. She demonstrated a great deal of motivation and commitment and saved a portion of the money she needed, so we invested \$500 in new tires for her. She is now working part time at \$10 per hour, earning \$800 per month, and continues to search for better employment.